

FRAUD ALERT: The U.S. Justice Department Warns About Fake Unemployment Benefit Websites

The U.S. Department of Justice has received reports that fraudsters are creating websites mimicking unemployment benefit websites, including state workforce agency (SWA) websites, and Facebook pages to unlawfully capture consumers' personal information.

To lure consumers to these fake websites, fraudsters send spam text messages and emails purporting to be from an SWA and containing a link. The fake websites are designed to trick consumers into thinking they are applying for unemployment benefits and disclosing personally identifiable information and other sensitive data. That information can then be used by fraudsters to commit identity theft.

Unless from a known and verified source, Delawareans should never click on links in text messages or emails claiming to be from an organization offering the opportunity to apply for, expedite, or resolve issues you may have with unemployment insurance benefits. Instead, anyone needing to apply for, or address concerns regarding unemployment benefits should go to the official unemployment benefits website, which can be found at:

- <https://uicc.delawareworks.com/>

Schemes that use links embedded in unsolicited text messages and emails in attempts to obtain personally identifiable information are commonly referred to as phishing schemes.

Phishing messages may look like they come from government agencies, financial institutions, shipping companies, and social media companies, among many others.

Carefully examine any message purporting to be from a company and do not click on a link in an unsolicited email or text message. Remember that the Delaware Department of Labor generally does not contact you to ask for your username or password. When in doubt, contact the entity purportedly sending you the message, but do not rely on any contact information in the potentially fraudulent message.

The Delaware Department of Labor does use Facebook to inform the public of changes, updates, and general information regarding the agency. You can find our official Facebook page at

- <https://www.facebook.com/DelawareDOL>

Our Facebook page has been verified by a “Blue Check Mark,” immediately following our page name as it is listed on the Facebook page. We will never request your username, password, social security number, full address, etc.. over the Facebook platform.

If you receive a text message or email claiming to be from the Delaware Department of Labor and containing a link that requests your username and password, please report the communication to the Delaware Department of Labor at UI Fraud Division by calling (302) 761-8397 or by sending an email to

UIFraud@Delaware.gov

You may also contact the National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) by calling 866-720-5721 or using the NCDF Web Complaint Form found at www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud.

If you believe you may have entered information into a fraudulent website, resources on how to protect your information can be found at <http://www.identitytheft.gov>.

To read the full press release from the United States Department of Justice visit <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-warns-about-fake-unemployment-benefit-websites>

To learn more about identifying and protecting yourself from phishing attempts, go to <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-recognize-and-avoid-phishing-scams> or <https://www.fbi.gov/scams-and-safety/common-scams-and-crimes/spoofing-and-phishing>.

Further information about the SWA-imposter scheme, and other major scams targeting American consumers, can be found on the Justice Department's Transnational Elder Fraud Strike Force website: <https://www.justice.gov/civil/consumer-protection-branch/transnational-elder-fraud-strike-force>.

For more information about the Consumer Protection Branch,

visit <http://www.justice.gov/civil/consumer-protection-branch>.

The Delaware Department of Labor connects people to jobs, resources, monetary benefits, workplace protections, and labor market information to promote financial independence, workplace justice, and a strong economy.

For more information on support services and training opportunities, please visit <http://labor.delaware.gov>